

Department of Biochemistry,
University of Cambridge.

14 December, 1957.

Dear *D. Lederberg.*

The response to my earlier letter and the proposed note to Nature has been agreeably favourable. The only complete dissident is Weidel who says "even a megatherium protoplast is not a protoplast in the old sense - the very old sense - since it still has a morphologically and chemically distinct envelope around its proto- or cytoplasm I should call this envelope the second innermost layer of the wallprotoplasts, if defined as drops of cytoplasm plus nuclear material set free from their natural envelope(s) don't seem to have been obtained by anybody yet."

P.W. Wilson wishes us well but says "I do not think I should sign such a note for the simple reason that I am not competent in the field. We have not done enough work if four or five people can agree this would be sufficient to justify the publication of the statement,"

No replies have been received from Gerhardt, Mitchell & Moyle, Storck and Spiegelman. However, Gerhardt and Storck had earlier personally agreed with the general outline.

The draft was also sent to Klieneberger-Nobel who expressed agreement with it; to Lederberg who says "your criticism about the characterisation of protoplasts seems to me entirely valid, and it is becoming more and more certain that different treatments are giving units with varying degrees of impairment of wall structure and function"; it has also been sent to Fraser with whom I have been corresponding for some time. I have not had a reply to an earlier letter about definitions nor have I yet heard from him about the note to Nature.

The following are in general agreement and will probably or certainly sign a joint letter to Nature:

Brenner
Jeynes
Kandler
Kellenberger
Rubio-Huertos
Salton
Strange & Dark
Tomcsik
Weibull

It seems likely that Gerhardt and Storck also would agree and it is hoped that Lederberg will also do so.

In these circumstances I feel it is justifiable to proceed as follows: I have slightly modified the draft not in the light of various suggestions and I am sending it to the Editor of Nature with a covering letter saying that most of the signatures are of people who have formally agreed but that some have expressed agreement with the contents without specifically indicating readiness to sign - it will be entirely possible for anyone to withdraw his name at the proof stage. I would be grateful, therefore, if anyone who wishes to disassociate himself would let me know in writing by return of post so that the elimination can be made.

Yours sincerely,

*See enclosed letter.
K.P.D.*

*All good wishes
Frank M. Dark*